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The Portland Spectator, February 2007

Portland State University. Student Publications Board

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the portland
Spectator

World View

February 2007

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The Portland Spectator accepts letters to the editor and commentaries from students, faculty and staff at the Portland State University. Please limit your letters to 300 words.

We reserve the right to edit material we find obscene, libelous, inappropriate or lengthy. We are not obliged to print anything that does not suit us. Unsolicited material will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Submission constitutes testimony as to the accuracy.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Portland Spectator is to show that a conservative philosophy is the proper way to approach issues of common concern. Our viewpoint originates from the following principles:

Individual Liberty

The Importance of Values and Customs

Free Market Economy and Free Trade

The Rule of Law

The Portland Spectator is published by the Portland State University Publication Board; and is staffed solely by volunteer writers. The Portland Spectator is funded through incidental student fees, advertisement revenue, and private donations. In general the staff of the Portland Spectator share beliefs in the following:

-We believe that the academic environment should become again an open forum, where there is a chance for rational and prudent arguments to be heard. The current environment of political correctness, political fundamentalism and mob mentality stifle genuine political debate.

-We support high academic standards.

-We believe that each student should be judged solely on his/her merits.

-We oppose the special or preferential treatment of any one person or group.

-We believe in an open, fair and small student government. .

-We oppose all efforts toward an equality of condition, for this violates any principle of justice that can maintain a free and civilized society.

-We oppose the welfare state that either benefits individuals, groups or corporations. The welfare state in the long run creates more poverty, dependency, and social and economic decline.

-We believe in the Free Market, and that the sole role of government in economic matters is to provide the institutional arrangements that allow the Free Market to flourish.

-We do not hate the rich; we do not idolize the poor.

-We believe in an activist U.S. foreign policy that seeks to promote and establish freedom, political and economic, all around the world.

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Comics found from Daryl Cagle's Professional Cartoonist's Index

Letter to the Editor

Editor,

Thank you again for finally responding to our letter. In your response, you indicated thinking that you had addressed all of our concerns and said, "if there is something I missed please let me know." Well, you missed quite a bit, so here goes.

It seems that you took our letter to be motivated by personal offense. While we admit that as women's studies students (Cathy is majoring in women's studies and women's studies is Jennifer's minor) we felt that the article impugned the credibility of our chosen course of study as well as the PSU women's studies department faculty, staff and students, we did not feel personally attacked or offended.

The most glaring offenses were the poor choices you made about what you were publishing and your apparent lack of regard for the charter that governs your operation. Again, we will refer you to the charter that clearly states when you decide to impugn the reputation of a person or group you need to provide an opportunity for that person or group to respond. Our reading of the charter indicates that this opportunity should be offered so that the response is published in the same issue. As we see it, your job is to publish a magazine that informs, enlightens, or sparks constructive debate. Filling a space with an article and misrepresenting it as news or as academic writing and then failing to acknowledge its origin just because of "a special request from some students to publish it" is negligence in the performance of your duty and a disservice to the community that you serve. We wonder, did you even bother to get permission to publish the article by Ms. Lukas or did you intentionally plagiarize her?

Especially insulting is that this does not seem to be your first offense of this sort, in fact it seems that poor decisions and standards are the norm for this publication. The thing that disturbs us most is that any publication of such inferior quality damages the reputation of every student and faculty member at PSU. We feel strongly that you should take immediate steps to improve the quality of your publication and should not publish until you have done so. You should also publish an acknowledgement of your mistakes with regard to this article in the next issue of the Spectator and apologize, then let the readers know that a response from the women's studies department will be published in the future. If you choose not to publish for a while in order to improve the quality of your publication, I am sure the Rearguard and/or the Vanguard would be happy to publish statements from you about your plans along with the apology and response on the Carrie Lukas piece.

If you are truly looking for someone to write point/counterpoint for the Spectator may we first suggest that you make the Spectator something that even its opponents must respect because the articles are written respectfully, professionally, constructively, and credibly. Then you should have no trouble getting letters to the editor, finding writers and you may even solve the problem of having your magazine destroyed. We think vandals are stealing the Spectator and destroying it because they are embarrassed for you because of the poor quality of the magazine. We were also wondering if you had invited the assistance of Josh Gross or anyone at the Rearguard to assist in recruitment of a counterpoint writer.

The last issue we would like to address is the issue of a response to the Carrie Lukas article. Any response to this article should come in collaboration with the PSU women's studies department. We need details on the publication deadline we would be facing and feel strongly that we should be given the same amount of space as the original article.

We hope your next response will include an honest and thoughtful acknowledgment of your failures, an assurance that our grievances will be addressed and amends made, and a pledge to make the Spectator a respectable publication.

Sincerely,

Cathy Jackson-Zellmer
Jennifer Bessire

Bananas and Cocaine

Between \$6.5 and 7.8 million worth of cocaine was found by grocery store employees in Amsterdam while unpacking a shipment of bananas. An investigation is in process to determine the origin of the 50 kilos of cocaine. At this point, police believe it was nothing more than a logistics error that landed the drugs in the supermarket.

Chopsticks and Entrance Exams

Culture is apparently quite important in China. In Tokyo, Hisatagakuen Sasebo Girls' High School is now including a test of applicants skills with chopsticks in addition to reading, writing, science, and arithmetic. Six sided chopsticks will be utilized by applicants. This style of chopstick is supposed to be easier to use and will counteract nervous hands of students during the application process.

Would You Steal a Urinal?

Urinal thieves reside in London. Upon being captured on video stealing a urinal from the Royal Oak Pub, the 42-year-old man turned himself into police. When asked what possessed the man to remove the toilet item, he claimed he needed the piece as a souvenir. He was let off with an official caution upon returning the property.

Dinner Menu: 11 Guard Dogs

Malaysia is short eleven guard dogs. The dogs, who were protecting a fruit orchard, ran into a 23 foot long python which was looking for its next meal. Eleven guard dogs were sacrificed before villagers found the animal which when stretched out spans the width of a tennis court and is as big around as a tree trunk.

Minimum Wage Increases Do Not Help

Minimum wage is on the rise. Again. Democrats are making their presence in government known as they passed a bill that will raise the wage from \$5.15 per hour to \$7.25. Acting in a way that they see necessary to decrease the gap between the rich and the poor, all they have successfully accomplished in implementing an increase in the cost of all products. Although many may initially see this as a plus, the impact on the economy from this hike will be detrimental.

Plugging His Ears to Bob Dylan

Apparently Bob Dylan is not entertaining to everyone. Leave it to Simon Cowell to verbally attack a legend. The American Idol judge (who makes a habit of offensive comments) stated that upon hearing "Blowin in the Wind" he would "plug my ears and run in the other direction." Tactful?

LA Just Got Hotter

Soccer sensation David Beckham and wife Victoria will now be calling Los Angeles, California home. Upon being released from the English National Team at the completion of the World Cup, Beckham has signed a contract with the Los Angeles Galaxy. His contract is being called "the biggest deal in global sport history" and is worth several hundred million over the next five years.

Dream Home for Sale; Asking Price: \$155 Million

\$155 million later, you too could be a home owner. Tim Blixseth, a timber and real estate baron, is in the works of building the most expensive home on record which he then plans to turn around and sell. Built in the Yellowstone Club (a members only ski resort near Bozeman, Montana) the home would span 53,000 square feet containing ten bedrooms and would sit on 160 acres of land. Additionally, it would include a membership to the prestigious ski resort, feature a pool and theater, and would come fully furnished.

Campus Update

STUDENT GOVERNMENT SEASON



Student elections are again on their way. Prepare to be canvassed, stumble upon countless fliers, and see the park blocks become far more colorful. Each spring, student select the individuals who will run the inter-workings of PSU for the following year. Elected representatives control student fee money, run special programs on campus, communicate with various organizations related to educational policies on a local and national level, and do what they see is best for the students of PSU. This year, two groups have again begun to emerge as they go head to head in hopes of sitting atop the food chain at PSU. Patrick Beisell and Rudy Soto have currently made statements pertaining to their bid for the presidential position.

Compiled by Crystal Joele Rea
Information has been derived from various media sources.

Photography courtesy of Bryan Glenn

Wrestling with Universal Healthcare

Should healthcare should be a universal right to Americans? Two things are for sure: One, in order to live a successful, happy, and prosperous life each individual must have his or her health. Two, Californians soon will.

With the cost of healthcare skyrocketing and insurance becoming increasingly more difficult to obtain, Arnold Schwarzenegger has a plan. On January 8, the governor of California proposed a \$12-billion a year plan to bring universal healthcare to the great state.

The aim of the proposal is to minimize increasing costs of healthcare and provide insurance to the uninsured. Schwarzenegger said, "Prices for health care and insurance are rising twice as fast as inflation, twice as fast as wages. That is a terrible drain on everyone, and it is a drain on our economy," which is the platform for the current proposed reforms.

Under the guidelines, companies with ten or more employees would be responsible for paying the full cost of healthcare for all employees or place 4% of payroll into an account to provide the care. Additionally, doctors would be forced to pay 2% of their gross revenues to support universal healthcare and a 4% tax would be imposed on hospitals.

Insurance companies would help foot the bill in the plan as well as 85% of premium revenues will go to patient care. Further, companies would not have the right to refuse insurance to anyone based on prior medical issues. This requirement would force companies to limit the amount being spent on administrative costs.

Schwarzenegger has held healthcare for children as one of his most prominent issues since the beginning of his campaign and continues to use the Healthy Families program to ensure that children are taken care of medically. Currently, the program supports children who have parents making

less than three times the poverty level.

If implemented, Schwarzenegger is effectively saying, "you must be insured."

Although doctors will receive less for their services initially, so many more people will have access to the healthcare system that it might swing the other way based on demand and the curbing of unpaid medical expenses incurred by physicians. In addition, California already has a huge 30% surplus of doctors and this will potentially have an affect on the overpopulation of

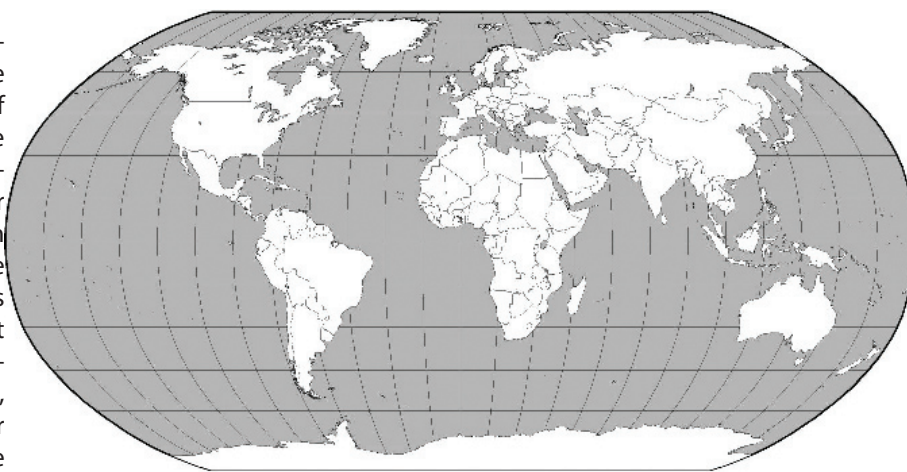
currently exists would be balanced with the higher demand for services. Economically speaking, the demand and supply curves would come together.

What does the issue of healthcare look like on a national scale? 2005 census data illustrated 44.6 million citizens currently live without insurance, 8.3 million of which are children. These statistics show an increase in over a million uninsured citizens in one year. Today's government continues to talk in circles and this issue will likely remain open for at least four more years. As a country where health of its citizens is steadily declining while the rate of uninsured is on a steady incline this issue is one that needs to be moved back to main burner.

On January 24, the Institute of Medicine (an organization sponsored by congress) released a report recommending the implementation of national healthcare. Dr.

Arthur Kellermann, an Emory University School of Medicine professor stated: "I believe we're reaching the point where the system is unsustainable." As prices continue to rise and the number of uninsured continues to deplete, the point is easily understood.

The health of a nation rests on the health of its citizens. As health unravels, the nation will follow. Government holds a responsibility to its citizens to better the world we live in, and universal healthcare is a good first step. The Harris Poll of 2005 showed that between 60 and 75% of US citizens desire a universal healthcare system. Citizens want tangible solutions and direct benefits. The United States has the lowest satisfaction rate in relation to healthcare out of all industrialized nations. Rather than suffocating with coverage the minor issues, focus needs to be shifted into the giant elephant in the room... maybe Schwarzenegger is the biggest elephant of them all.



physicians in California.

Currently, hospitals in California are closing their doors because they cannot afford to continue to treat patients without insurance. Healthcare debts are enormous and when unpaid are leading to the depletion of the healthcare system in California currently. Granting insurance to each citizen would solve this problem.

Quality of healthcare would improve if such a system were to be implemented. Managed healthcare or "gatekeeping medicine" has resulted in access problems and probably have picked the low hanging fruit when it comes to achieving lower costs and premiums. 80% of doctors and 71% of citizens believe that the managed healthcare system has resulted in the degradation of the healthcare system. Current systems provide you with a limited number of healthcare providers covered with one selected method of insurance. Under a universal healthcare system, citizens would be free to utilize any healthcare provider they desire. Also, the surplus of doctors that

FEBRUARY

ALL MONTH: Stafford Poetry Exhibit at Portland State Library
Experience William Stafford's work in through the novel, *The World Speaks Everything to Us*

ALL MONTH: Gateway to Gold Mountain Exhibit at Portland State Library
Develop a better understanding of Asian immigration into the United States through photographs, videotaped documentary, and artifacts

FEBRUARY 1:

Advanced internet searching workshop
Portland State Library Room 220; 1:00 - 2:00 pm
Carnegie Conversation Event: Improving First Year Academic Performance & Retention at PSU
Smith Memorial Student Union Room 238; 3:00 - 5:500 pm
Global Forum: International Perspectives on World Changes
Montgomery Hall Lounge; 7:00 - 8:30 pm

FEBRUARY 3:

Women's Basketball v. Montana State at Peter W. Stott Center; 2:00 pm

FEBRUARY 7:

Global Forum: International Perspectives on World Changes
Montgomery Hall Lounge; 7:00 - 8:30 pm

FEBRUARY 9:

The PSU Literary Arts Council Presents: Suzan-Lori Parks (Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, screen writer and novelist)
Smith Memorial Student Union 238; 9:00 am
Transportation Seminar: Air Toxics and Mobile Sources, speaker Gregg Lande
Urban Center 204; 12:00 - 1:30 pm

FEBRUARY 13:

The PSU Literary Arts Council Presents: Marianne Boruch (poet and essayist, winner of two Pushcart prizes)
Smith Memorial Student Union 236; 2:00 pm

FEBRUARY 14:

Advanced Internet Searching Workshop
Portland State Library Room 220; 2:00 - 3:00 pm

FEBRUARY 15:

Business Briefing: Regional Economic Update
Multnomah Athletic Club; 7:15 - 9:00 am

 For more information referencing the above events, visit the Portland State University website at <http://www.pdx.edu/events/>

 Answers to last month's "Name that Feminist..."

1. f; 2. b; 3. g; 4. j; 5. m; 6. d; 7. l; 8. a; 9. k; 10. n; 11. c; 12. e; 13. i; 14. h

Bush's Changing Strategy: More Than Just Politics

By Mikel McDaniel

The recent and controversial decision by the Bush administration to send an additional 21,500 troops to Iraq brings into sharp relief our growing inability to draw meaningful distinctions between the "pro-war" and "anti-war" positions. When the invasion of Iraq was merely a proposal, being presented to the United Nations and our own Congress for consideration, the distinction was simple enough: pro-war supported the invasion, anti-war opposed it. But the decision to send our armed forces to Iraq has been made, it is in the past – war within Iraq is now the current reality. So have our general definitions of what it means to be pro-war and anti-war

this point, and it certainly does not follow that you must insist on all of our forces being returned home immediately (or in any sense prematurely). On the other hand, it also does not follow that any initial supporters of the war effort must necessarily support more of our young men and women being sent into combat. What matters at this point is how we will deal with the current strategic situation.

The subset of the American population that would like to see our military fail in its current efforts (defined as too many of our soldiers dying to sustain deployment) is so negligibly small that

"It is foolish to assume that being anti-war means that one does not support the continuation of the conflict, for this would place the President and the military in the "anti-war camp" and further render the terms useless.

It is probably safe to say that the only people interested in actually maintaining the bloodshed are a handful of arms dealers and tribal warlords"

evolved to accommodate the new circumstances? If your answer is no, then the semantics are simple enough: pro-war stipulates that we were right to invade Iraq, anti-war maintains that it was a bad idea. Unfortunately, neither of these positions is particularly meaningful when contemplating our current situation.

It does not follow that if you opposed the initial invasion, you must necessarily oppose any additional increase of resources at

it can be ignored for present considerations. Minimizing casualties seems to be a reasonable virtue upon which almost all citizens – of all political and ethical persuasions – can agree. But there should not be anyone so unfamiliar with the current state of the entire Middle East that they could make the oversimplistic assumption that withdrawing our troops from Iraq must necessarily lead to a reduction in casualties. Almost all intelligent, informed

sources confirm that a withdrawal of U.S. forces would lead to an escalation of sectarian conflict and, hence, Iraqi deaths. For our part, leaving the region would indicate a grim turn in the history of our national security, since America (and Western civilization in general) is already a popular scapegoat among the many feuding factions of the Middle East, and even the slightest spark of organization in the wake of the bloodshed could quickly turn into a grave and escalating danger to our country. The threat of another attack similar to 9/11 is not merely a hollow, political scare-tactic, it is a sensible expectation.

It is foolish to assume that being anti-war means that one does not support the continuation of the conflict, for this would place the President and the military in the "anti-war camp", and further render the terms useless. It is probably safe to say that the only people interested in actually maintaining the bloodshed are a handful of arms dealers and tribal war-lords. The reason the Bush administration is proposing sending more troops overseas is to help bring the war to a quicker and safer conclusion. The idea that sending more soldiers to Iraq could possibly help in hastening the end of the war and reducing the overall damage of the incident is what must be considered at this point. Whether or not you consider yourself pro-war or anti-war is irrelevant to the current question: will sending these additional forces help?

I am not a military strategist, nor anything close to an expert on the situation in the Middle East, and as such I make no claim to competence regarding this question. I do not have an answer, or even a particularly informed opinion. The important point to make is that I am not alone in this: the majority of American citizens do not have the foundations for an intelligent answer to this question either. The sooner people understand this fact and see that our notions of pro-war and anti-war are simplistic and obsolete in today's circumstances, the sooner we will be able to make intelligent proposals for dealing with Iraq. Our country is a republic, and as such its government is subject to a considerable deal of transparency – but this boon is for naught if its citizens are not asking good questions; or worse, not asking any questions at all.

Already Congress is drawing lines in the sand; the old boundaries of pro-war versus anti-war have not budged, with many who supported the initial invasion in the former camp and those who derided it in the latter camp. The uninformed, politically charged commentary from both sides smacks of public appeal. Politicians know that if they want to attract the anti-war base, they must oppose the "surge," even though there is no meaningful connection between the two, and vice-versa for the pro-war politicians. But this situation deserves more than petty political fundamen-

talism, a great many lives hang in the balance, and there is no easy or obvious way out. Our political prejudices may serve us in other circumstances by making complex issues more clear and manageable, but they have done little more than get in our way during the war, they have driven wedges between individuals and groups that otherwise do not have any remarkable distinctions. The future will be best served by honestly considering our circumstances, by openly discussing the decisions, and, most of all, by a spirit of cooperation; and if you simply do not understand the situation – if you cannot conjure an opinion from anything except your partisan predispositions – then, for now, do not be afraid to say "I don't know".



The Iraqi Surrender Group

by Jared Stilwell

Richard Nixon, the arch-villain of the Left, once observed that some people want power to do big things. Others want power to be big people. The Iraqi Study (Surrender) Group is headed by people who, unfortunately, fall into the latter category. James Baker III, former Secretary of State during the first Bush administration, helped chair the Surrender Group. The other co-chair, Lee Hamilton, served 34 years in Congress and spent time on the House Committee on Foreign Relations.

The Surrender Group was commissioned by Congress to study the effects of the war in Iraq and propose solutions. Such commissions are common in current American governance. Basically, Congress and the executive branch, and both parties are guilty on this count, do not want to be burdened with formulating policy. Therefore, both Congress and the president have commissioned studies regarding taxation, Social Security reform, and education; rarely are the proposed solutions ever implemented by Congress. Each member of Congress has an agenda that serves the needs of his or her constituents, and the proposed reforms fail to materialize. Solutions that are often the most practical are not always the most feasible politically.

People who serve on these commissions are trying to affect policy. However, they also know that Congress does not always implement the best reforms. One does not have to be overly familiar with Washington to know the Congress not only fails to enact good policy, but it also passes some truly noxious laws.

Seeing the Middle East with Rose-Colored Glasses

All of this brings us back to Jimmy Baker the Third. The Iraqi Surrender Group has come up with 79 recommendations to fix the situation in Iraq. Baker demonstrated his hubris by saying, "I hope we don't treat this like a fruit salad and say, 'I like this but I don't like that.' This is a comprehensive strategy." You see, unless President Bush implements all 79 recommendations, Baker has the perfect cover if things become worse in Iraq.

The Group explains: "It is clear to Iraq Study Group members that all of Iraq's neighbors are anxious about the situation in Iraq. They favor a unified Iraq that is strong enough to maintain its territorial integrity, but not so powerful as to threaten its neighbors. None favors the breakup of the Iraqi state."

Syria and Iran fund and support insurgents and terrorists because of those nations' anxiety concerning Iraq? Does Baker really think that Syria's Assad and Iran's Ahmednejad really have no imperialist ambitions? Iran wants to control the Shiite population in Iraq. Syria has already established a client state in Lebanon, and Bashir Assad seems keen on continuing his father's quest for regional hegemony.

The Group's fifth recommendation is that the support group to stabilize Iraq "should consist of Iraq and all the states bordering Iraq, including Iran and Syria." That is a great idea, except for one thing – Iran and Syria are not interested in a stable Iraq. These fanciful notions of "should" are not indicative of the true situation in Iraq. Let's put it this way: David Hansen, Professor of Information Technology, "should" give all of his students A's in his courses. Let me

tell you, that ain't gonna happen. Governments "should" stop passing stupid laws. Every young man "should" have a hot date on Saturday night. The point is that anyone can describe what should be, but the group was commissioned to ascertain the reality of the situation. They failed miserably.

As naïve as all of these recommendations are, perhaps the most asinine of all the assertions made by the Surrender Group is that negotiations with Iran and Syria would affect change. Iran has been at war with America for nearly 28 years. Iranian radicals held 52 American hostages for 444 days in 1979 through 1981. Among these captors was current Iranian president, Mahmoud Ahmedinejad, who has called the Holocaust a myth and threatened to obliterate Israel. Iran has also used its terror subsidiaries, like Hezbollah, to murder Americans.

Syria, on the other hand, has sought to expand its own influence throughout the Middle East. The assassination of Rafik Hariri, the former prime minister of Lebanon, caused public opinion to turn against the Assad regime. However, as the world turned its eyes back on Iraq, Damascus has been reestablishing its hegemony over Lebanon. Damascus has been a rival of Iraq ever since Hafez al-Assad became the dictator of Syria in 1970. The Ba'ath Party in Syria has allowed materiel and terrorists to be smuggled into Iraq, and Damascus is responsible for the deaths of hundreds, if not thousands, of Americans.

The cabals in Damascus and Tehran will not see attempts at negotiations by the United States as a cooperative endeavor. They will correctly see what the Baker Commission suggestions for what they are – a cravenly attempt to cut and run. Just because the Surrender Group does not want

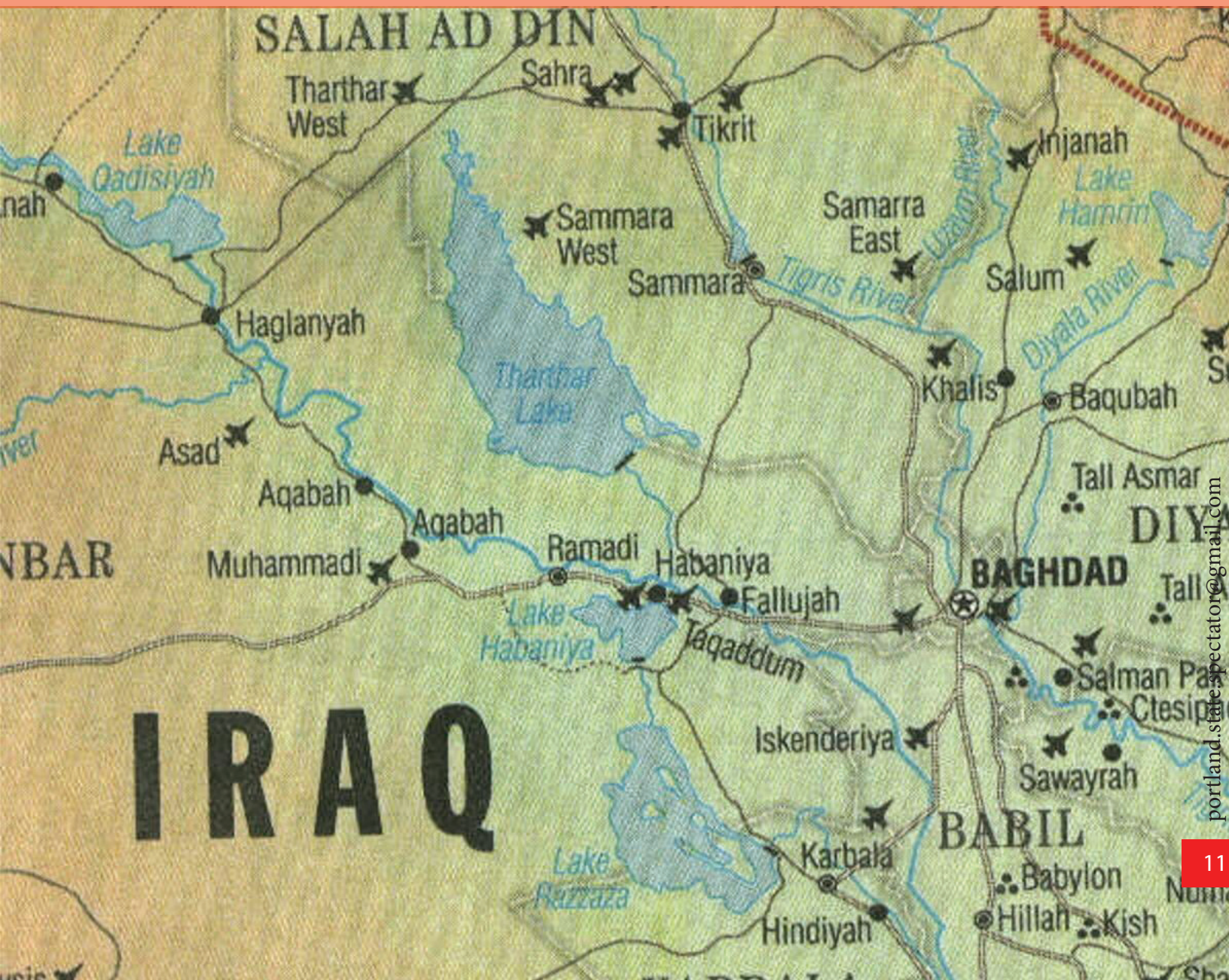
to believe Iran and Syria are fighting us in a regional conflagration does not mean it is not so. I understand the desire to long for the world before 9/11, however, 19 Islamic terrorists changed the world forever on that fateful day.

The Ever-Ready Bogeyman: The Jews

The commission's report also throws our greatest ally, Israel, under the bus. To induce Damascus to cooperate, Baker suggests that Israel return the Golan Heights to Syria. During the 6 Days War in 1967, Israel seized the Golan Heights to enhance their own security. The Heights is important because it can be used to launch at-

tacks into major population centers in Israel. Jerusalem's previous attempts to return land it once seized to provide a buffer have ended in disaster. For instance, Hezbollah has used the parts of Lebanon to launch attacks into Haifa. Syria provided materiel and funding to Hezbollah, and Baker seems to think somehow Assad will not use the Heights to launch rockets into Jerusalem. Is Baker really that naïve? No, but Baker wants to try to achieve one last peace accord that will cement his name as a great statesman – this from a man who once said "F*** the Jews." If I were an Israeli, I would not put too much trust in the ideas of Baker.

The Iraqi Study Group had the opportunity to shape the debate on Iraq, but the report is irrelevant. The reality is that we are in a regional war with Syria, Iran, al-Qaeda, et al. Any negotiations with Damascus and Tehran will be surrender; that is how those two regimes will see attempts at negotiation. Contrary to Islamic terrorists, third-world thug dictators, and James Baker, Israel and the Jews are not responsible for the world's ills. Jerusalem does not have to compromise its security to please the criminal in Damascus. James Baker will not be remembered as someone who changed the world for the better. He is, and always will be, someone who wants to be a big person.



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Ski Hood

by Austin Soter

It's time to strap em' up and hit the slopes! Oregon has been blessed with above average snowfall the last couple years transforming Mt. Hood into a winter playground for skiers and boarders alike. For those unfamiliar with the mountain, most Hood junkies will tell you Timberline, Meadows, and Ski Bowl are the premier resorts on the mountain. The three are similar in they provide epic ski areas for locals and tourists. Nonetheless, each resort has specific characteristics that make them unique.

For riders who seek vast terrain and challenging runs Meadows is the place to be. Meadows is the largest resort on the mountain and undoubtedly the most popular among the locals. The nine feet of snow base covers up most rocks and should ensure good skiing well into the end of March.

Timberline, alternately, caters to those looking for a smaller ski area, flatter terrain, and renowned lodging. Despite its smaller overall area, Timberline is the highest resort on Mt. Hood with the lodge breaching 6,000 ft. This high elevation preserves the snow and allows for year round skiing.

The final resort of the trio is Ski Bowl. Ski Bowl is the smallest of the three but packs a big punch. The resort offers surprisingly challenging terrain, a sledding hill, snowmobile rentals, and is famous for being America's largest night skiing area. Ski Bowl is also the cheapest of the three with adult day passes around \$32 and night passes just \$24.

An important thing to remember before heading to the mountain is always check ski conditions. Nothing is worse than arriving at the mountain only to be greeted by freezing rain and chilling wind. Skihood.com is the best resource for weather conditions, ticket prices, and level of snow fall. This website provides information for all resorts and is a valuable tool to bookmark on your web browser.

No matter which resort you choose or the level of skill you hit the slopes with, it is a guarantee you will leave the mountain with chapped lips, sore legs, and a smile on your face. Ski enthusiasts from around the world travel to Mt. Hood each year to reap the benefits of Oregon snow. We are lucky enough to have the amazing mountain in our back yard; so grab some wax, a couple buddies, and enjoy the powder.



MYTHS, FAIRYTALES, CODE WORDS, SPIN, and JUST PLAIN OL' LIES

by Robert S. Reece

The first myth that I want to address is that the rest of the world hates us! The rest of the world hates us, right? Isn't that what we are told day in and day out by the people who "report the news"?

There are plenty of replies we might make, such as, "Who says?", "Who cares?" or maybe, "We deserve it!" There are a multitude of possible responses comprising the spectrum between my first and last examples.

If the rest of the world "hates us," then I want to ask why people worldwide want "American" blue jeans, "Levis" in particular. Worldwide, counterfeiters are operating with enterprising travelers to Russia gathering up, and even purchasing, used Levis to sell; did you ever wonder what the motivating force for the production of "distressed" jeans was?

Have you ever traveled in Europe? Just turn on the radio in a foreign country. It is not difficult to find a station with American music and English speaking announcers. Try listening to foreign stations on the Internet. Yup! Again you are bound to find American music and English speaking announcers.

If you travel in Europe, expect to see "McDonalds." European elites decry these "American" influences, but the English language is very popular as a foreign language to be studied in German schools, and (former) East German schools have paid bonuses for teachers of "English, American dialect." In fact, English has now replaced French as the "lingua franca" of Europe.

Hollywood teaches the rest of the world how to be just like us (because they, Hollywood, hate us so much)! Europeans want to know if Americans, as depicted in our movies, "are really like that?" Well, what is your answer to that one?

I have met a lot of everyday Europeans, and I have not encountered any that hate us. Some are incredulous, some are, maybe, a little jealous, but most are just interested in being friends.

So where does this myth arise? I think it has as its sources: the myriad leftists here at home, i.e., The New York Times, along with other media types. And CNN, and other such T.V. networks. European elites who aspire to be just like Americans (because they hate us so much), passionately copy after these Hollywood, media, and T.V. types and end up in the position of hating Americans because they aspire to be just like us. I never could make any sense of it, but I think it comes down to this: Europeans read in their newspapers that they are supposed to hate America because the "world's greatest newspapers", The New York Times, says they do, and then The New York Times reports that they do!!

Well, it is the truth! Just go there yourself! Can't afford the trip? Then talk to any exchange student here at Portland State

University. Ask them where they got their ideas about the United States. Then ask them what they found out that surprised them the most when they got here and could see for themselves.

The second myth I want to address is: "Every American should study a foreign language." I am going to call this a loony idea from the "kook left fringe." It is one of the "feel good" notions that have taken in most of the liberal left elites in this country.

Why should an American study a foreign language? How long must a person study a language in order for it to be useful? Some might claim two years, assuming 12-15 credit hours per year at a college or university. Well, maybe, but it took me eight years of study to reach that point—including 6 months of living in a country where it is the native language. Granted, I may be a slow learner in relation to linguistics, but straight "A's" in human anatomy, human physiology and general psychology do not exactly place me in the class of "average" learners.

Ok, when do I need this language? If I do business or travel in the USA, I don't need it. If I travel to Canada, I don't need it. If I travel to Mexico, anywhere, an American might wish to visit, there will be people who want me to spend my money enough that they will make the effort to speak English; the same basically holds for Europe. Besides, if I decide to travel in Europe, how long will I likely be in any one country? One day's travel in Europe can easily take you through three or four different countries. On which language do I invest two to eight years of study? Dutch? French? Basque? German? Italian? Greek? Swedish? Polish? Russian? Hungarian? Turkish? Norwegian? Spanish? Portuguese?

Are two to eight years of studying Japanese worth it for even a whole month's vacation in Japan?

Granted, there are opportunities in business if you can speak a foreign language, but are these enough to warrant a foreign language requirement for a high school diploma? I don't think so! What about Spanish? Don't a lot of businesses want to hire people who speak Spanish in order to be able to do business with the 10 million new Spanish speaking "customers" we have? So I guess we should "require" that 300,000,000 Americans should study Spanish for two years in high school so that we can serve 10 million Spanish speaking customers! Try to make sense of that for me! 300 million people need to learn a foreign language so that 10 million people don't have to learn English!

This is not just a myth, it is also pure nonsense. Study a foreign language if it suits you. That is ok and it should be your choice, but let us not waste everybody's time on something that is really not all that necessary.

Was that Discrimination?

Distinguishing unjust discrimination from abuse of discrimination by Tessie Lopez

The unjustified treatment of a person or group, on the basis of prejudice, is regarded as unacceptable in a politically correct society yet, even though that is so, discrimination continues to subsist in the minds of the old and new. How many of you have actually encountered or known someone victimized through discrimination? In fact, how many of us have encountered people in the past who

utilize race, gender, and religion as an excuse for discrimination? The following are true stories and opinions shared by those who have faced such encounters. I leave it to the reader's discretion to discern which cases expose legitimate victimization and which cases exhibit unjust utilization of discrimination.

Alert: Gay Man in Church

Tessie, I am a gay man who was raised in the Fundamentalist Church, in Oregon and then here in the San Francisco bay area. I was deeply involved in ministry and music until they discovered that I was gay. My first horrible event happened at a church I attended in Oakland, when the pastor told me I would either denounce my homosexual orientation or be shunned... No one would have anything to do with me and I would be removed from the church if I tried to enter. I left, and yet returned after several years because Fundamentalism was so engrained in me. Then five years ago my Mom wrote me a letter telling me that because of my "unacceptable lifestyle" it would be better if I didn't return to visit the family any longer. I am a successful business person, educated and certainly not "unacceptable" by any standard but fundamentalism. It all virtually destroyed me ... and I remain pretty destroyed inside, yet healing and moving on to a new and bigger life, free from the fundamentalist faith.

- Ron in California

Women in the Automobile World

Tessie, here's a fact I've got for ya: females aren't treated equally in comparison to males, when it comes to servicing or purchasing a car. Here's an example: when you go to a dealership and if you are with your spouse, the service advisors talk to the male spouse instead of the female. When a woman goes alone to a service center, the staff treats her like she doesn't know anything about cars. Women also pay more for vehicles because sales people take advantage of their insecurity about cars. When a woman buys a vehicle, the sales people tell her how great the car is for an hour. Then they try to sell her an extended warranty because the car may not be that great after all.

-Elise in New Jersey

I'm Not White but I'm Still Rich

Tessie, I live in a predominantly, very wealthy, white community and I went to Bebe and asked about a top. The sales associate said: "that's \$80, the sale section is over there". Meanwhile, I'm carrying a \$900 Gucci bag, \$300 Gucci sunglasses, and a set of Mercedes keys in my hand. I'm not white.

- Laura in California

It's the Wife's Fault

Tessie, I can tell you of a circumstance I know of where people abuse the concept of discrimination for personal gain. My brother is white and his wife is black. He was in the military and anytime he was passed over for a promotion, his wife would run to his superiors and claim he was passed over because she was black.

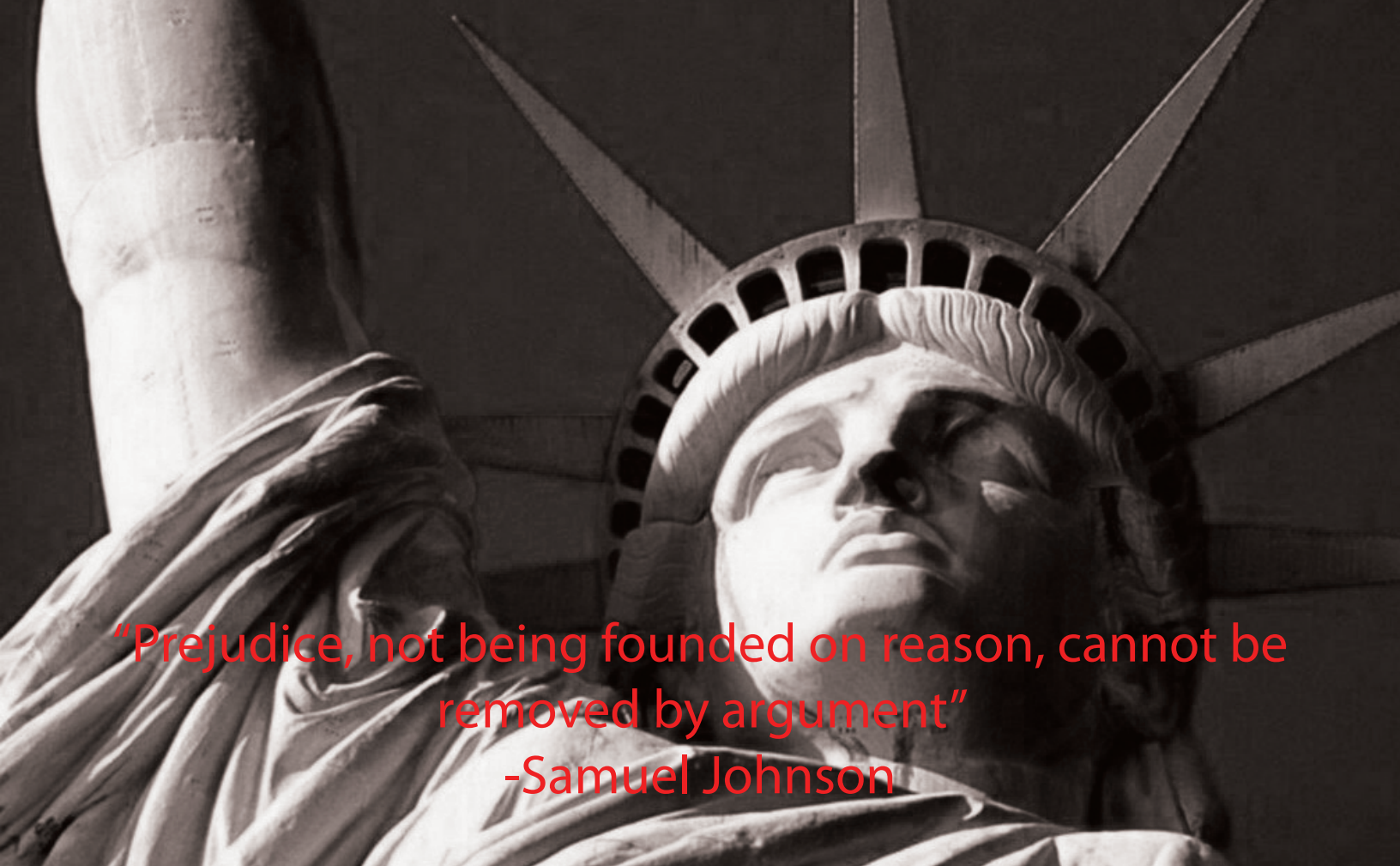
-Dave in Oregon

Misbehavin'

Tessie, I am deeply disturbed by all of the senseless people that have come to Harris County because the ones that refuse to behave and are minorities, accuse the authorities of discrimination, when they are caught and punished for provoking violence. Currently 63% of all crime in the county, is committed by displaced Katrina people. The crime rate has more than doubled. Saying anything about the immoral criminals in any race is "offensive" because it's not politically correct, and I being a minority myself, am not referring to the entire population of each race. Bless all the souls who abide by the rules but it's not fair that officials are blamed of discriminating when all they do is their job.

-Tom in Texas





"Prejudice, not being founded on reason, cannot be removed by argument"
-Samuel Johnson

Left Out of the Bible?

Tessie, I feel a sense of discrimination every time I read of Black People in the Bible. Slavery from Africa was 1200 years after Jesus, and to say that they were not in Scripture, gave the go ahead from both believers and the church to be prejudiced against them. See, the Church until this day has yet to preach the truth about Black People, to correct the lies or to show love in order to heal. Just a minute ago someone in the room said Martin Luther King had a mental problem and heard voices in his head and wrote them down. Earlier this week others have said black people are evil spirits born into human bodies. I had a very nice conversation with a man the other day. We talked for about 45 minutes concerning the interpretation of Scripture. While mentioning the history and culture of Jewish people, I also included Black People... then he left..... stopped cold.

-Jim in California

Offensive Groceries

Tessie, My dad's co-worker experienced a humiliating and scarring experience in a grocery store. She went shopping very late at night after work for her husband's birthday party she was preparing for the following day. She had a lot of food to purchase but as she was writing the check, the clerk refused to accept the check. She is an African American woman who carries herself like Condoleezza Rice, very sophisticated, educated, and married to a white man. When the clerk repeated "we can't take that check" cops arrived, handcuffing her and escorting her out of the store's premises. Once she was questioned and the cops realized she was no "trouble maker" she was released. This happened not too long ago in Vancouver.

-Eric in Washington

It's Not Mine But I Can still Use It

Tessie, while I was in college I was a sales clerk at a store. As a sales clerk, of course there are company regulations I had to abide by. Well, one day, a woman comes to my line and wants to purchase a couple items. Without really noticing who she was, I take the card she hands me and immediately I notice that a man's name is on the card. I ask the woman if she was the card holder and she replied by saying no, but that it was her husband's card. I asked if he was present so that he could sign and authorize the purchase. Immediately she got furious and demanded "this is because I'm black isn't it? And because my husband is white?" I say no ma'am, I'm just abiding by company policy. Infuriated she goes and talks to my manager but I tell you, I hadn't noticed she was black until she pointed it out and there was no way for me to know her husband was white.

-Sam in Oregon

Skin Pigment Produces Success

Tessie, I was in a class leadership workshop, the lady hosting the workshop was saying that black and indigenous people had to work harder to get what they wanted than white people and that we need to keep in mind that 90% of the people were Latinos. I was very upset with what she was saying because I felt that instead of being helpful, she was somehow saying that because of the color of skin, they would not amount to much, or that the world is against them. I was very upset and began to tell her all the things that I have accomplished because of who I was on the inside. She responded by saying that because of my "light skin", it helped me get what I have wanted. Once that was said, I stood up and left because I refused to believe her.

-Ash in Oregon

From Your Valentine

by Porsche Whitehead

“I don’t understand why Cupid was chosen to represent Valentine’s Day. When I think about romance, the last thing on my mind is a short, chubby toddler coming at me with a weapon.”

~Author Unknown

Every February 14th throughout the country, many celebrate Valentine’s Day. Flowers, boxes of chocolate, gifts, and cards are all exchanged in the name of this special little holiday. As I thought about this year’s Valentine’s Day a few things crossed my mind. First and foremost, I have never really had a real Valentine. I have always celebrated along each 14th day of February, but it doesn’t seem to count when the only Valentine I ever got was from little Bobby in 4th grade who sent me a Ninja Turtle Card asking if I would be his Super Cool, Totally Righteous Valentine. Even though we participate every year, I have always wondered where Valentine’s Day came from and what the story is behind it.

As I researched I found countless stories as to how Valentine’s Day came about, however, the one that seemed to be most popular was the story of a man named St. Valentine. The legend states that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. The story continues as Emperor Claudius the second made a law stating that all men should not be able to marry anymore because he believed single men made better soldiers than men with wives and children. As Valentine heard this law he saw it to be unjust, so he continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret, defying the laws of Claudius. When Claudius discovered

the actions of Valentine, he immediately declared Valentine to be put to death. Other stories proclaim that Valentine was martyred for trying to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons where they were tortured and beaten for their belief.

Despite the true origins of the holiday, the surfacing story that has made February 14th so popular is in the story of Valentine and his true love. According to this legend, Valentine sent the first actually greeting himself, the first ‘Valentine’. While in prison it is believed that Valentine fell deeply in love with a young girl who was thought to be the jailor’s daughter. She would visit him daily during his imprisonment and before his death, it is said that he wrote her one final letter, with which he signed “From your Valentine,” an expression that is still used to this day. Although the truth behind Valentine is cloudy, it is still very clear that he was emphasized as heroic, sympathetic, and also very romantic. Thus the meaning behind what we all celebrate today on the 14th of February.

So as all of you lovers out there buy your heart shaped boxes of chocolate, and flowers, and cologne, remember why it is we celebrate this special day, and don’t forget to sign your cards “From your Valentine.”

Osama’s Valentine

Little David comes home from first grade and tells his father that they learned about the history of Valentine’s Day. “Since Valentine’s Day is for a Christian saint and we’re Jewish,” he asks, “will God get mad at me for giving someone a valentine?”

David’s father thinks a bit, then says “No, I don’t think God would get mad. Who do you want to give a valentine to?”

“Osama Bin Laden,” David says.

“Why Osama Bin Laden,” his father asks in shock.

“Well,” David says, “I thought that if a little American Jewish boy could have enough love to give Osama a valentine, he might start to think that maybe we’re not all bad, and maybe start loving people a little bit. And if other kids saw what I did and sent valentines to Osama, he’d love everyone a lot. And then he’d start going all over the place to tell everyone how much he loved them and how he didn’t hate anyone anymore.”

His father’s heart swells and he looks at his boy with newfound pride.

“David, that’s the most wonderful thing I’ve ever heard.”

“I know,” David says, “and once that gets him out in the open, the Marines shoot him.”

Why Conservatives are Better Fuel to add to the liberal fire

A new book proves that conservatives really are more compassionate than liberals. Arthur Brooks, a Syracuse professor and top scholar of economics and public policy, has spent years researching this trend and the results were shocking to his existing ideology. In "Who Really Cares: The Surprising Truth about Compassionate Conservatism," Brooks claims that conservatives are more charitable than liberals and out give them in every measurable way. He also asserts that the religious are more charitable than secularists. So here you go all you liberal activists, promoting social justice and the upheaval of norms and values. Check this out and if you liberals still feel the need to continue whining about how evil and greedy us compassionate conservatives are, well... shut up.

This is my rant - M.C.



PORTLAND STATE COLLEGE REPUBLICANS

Are you interested in getting involved?

PSU College Republicans meet weekly to further the conservative movement on the Portland State Campus.

Meeting Times: Tuesday, 6pm
Meeting Location: Smith 233

Sic Semper Tyrannus

by Jared Stilwell

On December 30th, 2006, the world was riddled of its most-odious dictator – Saddam Hussein. December saw the demise of another authoritarian tyrant deposed from power as Augusto Pinochet died on December 10th due to a heart attack. Saddam, on the other hand, faced the hangman's noose after being convicted of mass murder in an Iraqi court. Two former tyrants, both deposed from power, hopefully have set the template for how authoritarian leaders end their lives.

Augusto Pinochet served as the commander-in-chief of the Chilean army in the early 1970s. Salvador Allende was elected president of Chile in 1970 with 36 percent of the vote. Once the Chilean Congress ratified Allende's election, he began to consolidate his power in Santiago. Fidel Castro, looking to export his Socialist paradise, met with Allende, who had nationalized much of Chile's industrial output. Though Allende was elected to office, he was hardly a democrat. Instead he took a page from the playbook of the European Communists who would run for office and then use the powers of state to advance their doctrinaire agenda.

The parliament of Chile voted on August 22nd, 1973 that Allende had violated the constitution and should be removed from office – by force, if necessary. Augusto Pinochet was appointed commander-in-chief of the army by President Allende the next day because Allende felt the general was the most loyal of all the Chilean military leadership. Pinochet, however, used his new position to act as the leader of the coup that ousted Allende from office on September 11th, 1973.

Saddam Hussein also came to power in a coup, though not at the expense of a democratic regime. Saddam was the Ba'ath Party secretary when they seized power in Iraq in 1968 and quickly gained power as he became the effective leader of Iraq by the early 1970s. Saddam formally assumed the Iraqi presidency in 1979.

A Tale of Two Tyrants

Both Hussein and Pinochet killed thousands of their own people, however, the two dictators do not have much in common. Pinochet is credited with killing 3,000 peo-

ple, but most of these deaths occurred in the turbulent period of the fall of 1973 and 1974. This period in Chilean history can be compared to a low-scale civil war. Once Pinochet was firmly enthroned as president of Chile, the political deaths ceased. Despite the end of political deaths, the people of Chile still lived in a police state.

Saddam, on the other hand, had a thirst for blood. Long before Lynndie England acquired notoriety for her sadistic pictures taken with prisoners in Abu Ghraib, Saddam and his two sons tortured political dissidents in the same prison. Saddam launched an attack on neighboring Iran and employed the use of chemical gas on the Iranians.

A favorite theory of the Left is Bush merely made up the fact that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction for a *caus belli* to go to war with Iraq. However, truth stands that not only did Saddam use chemical gas on the Iranians, but he also built a nuclear reactor in Osirak, Iraq. Noting that Saddam was likely to use the nuclear weapons developed against Israel, Prime Minister Menachim Begin did not wait until the UN Security Council to sanction Baghdad. Jerusalem responded to this threat by destroying the reactor to prevent Iraq from becoming a nuclear state in 1981.

Saddam was not evil only for his bellicosity just on the international scene. Within his country, Saddam authorized the full-scale extermination of hundreds of thousands of his own people. From the spring of 1987 until the fall of 1988, Saddam systematically sought to destroy every Kurdish village in Iraq. He used both conventional and chemical weapons to kill nearly 200,000 Kurds. The campaign was lead by Hussein's cousin, who earned the nickname "Chemical Ali" as a result.

After the first Gulf War in 1991, the Shiites in southern Iraq and the Kurds in northern Iraq rebelled against Saddam's regime. Saddam was quick to respond with his trademark viciousness. He launched air strikes against the Kurds and also proceeded to kill between 100,000 to 180,000 Shiites. Saddam then turned his wrath on the Marsh Arabs of the marshlands created by the Tigris River. Saddam had the river

dammed, thereby creating an ecological disaster. In addition to the environmental impact forced by the dam, the Marsh Arabs way of life also fell victim. Before Saddam's reprisal, a quarter of a million Arabs lived in the marshlands; only twenty to forty thousand remain.

Economics

Pinochet implemented free-market reforms in Chile. Chile's standard of living increased during the Pinochet junta. Though the general controlled the entire political infrastructure of Chile, he allowed the entrepreneurial element of the country to thrive. Chile, for instance, has a social security system that allows private accounts and is the envy of the world.

Saddam, on the other hand, used the natural resources of Iraq to enrich himself and his minions rather than enable the nation to flourish. As a totalitarian dictator, Saddam controlled every aspect of Iraqi life. During the years of embargo, Saddam's regime consumed large portions of the Iraqi GDP to keep the Ba'ath Party in power. One of the mistakes of the Bush administration was to underestimate how much the infrastructure of Iraq had deteriorated under the Saddam regime.

Removal from Power

Perhaps the starkest contrast between the two men is the manner in which they left office. The government of Chile drafted a new constitution that called for a plebiscite on the administration in 1988. Pinochet honored the provision and allowed the people to vote in a referendum on his presidency. Fifty-seven percent of the electorate voted to end Pinochet's presidency, and the military junta allowed free elections in the fall of 1989. On March 11th, 1990, Patricio Aylwin assumed the presidency of Chile, and the nation has been a stable democracy since.

Pinochet remained commander-in-chief of the army until 1998 and then was sworn in as a senator for life. Additionally, he was granted immunity for the crimes he committed as president of the country, though the international community did not honor this agreement. In 1998, Pinochet was in Great Britain to receive medical care. While there, he was detained by British officials

because the government of Spain wanted to extradite him for the disappearance of Spanish nationals during the coup of 1973. Pinochet never faced the consequences of his dictatorship in this life. He died as a civilian last month of a heart attack.

In the Middle East, there is no such thing as a former president. Tyrants seize power and hold on until they are assassinated or die in power. Saddam Hussein's regime fell shortly after the coalition lead by America invaded Iraq in the March of 2003. Saddam was eventually discovered in a spider hole by American troops on December 13th, 2003. Hussein, full of hubris, declared, "I am the President of Iraq." In response, the quick-witted soldier replied, "President Bush sends his regards."

Saddam was later put on trial for his crimes against humanity. The first crime he faced while on trial was the massacre in 1982 at Dujail, a Shiite town 40 miles north of Baghdad. Members of the Dawa Party, a Shiite group opposed to the Ba'ath Party and Saddam's war against Iran, attempted to assassinate Hussein. A three-hour fire-fight between rebel insurgents and Saddam's bodyguards ensued which was later

followed by Saddam's order for the execution of 148 men, including boys as young as 13. He additionally imprisoned 1,500 of the town's 10,000 inhabitants and sent others to desert camps while destroying a quarter of a million acres of farmland.

For these crimes, Saddam Hussein was found guilty by an Iraqi court on November 5th, 2006. He was hanged last December. The Iraqi nation commences the New Year without the specter of Saddam and Ba'ath insurgents can no longer hope that Saddam will be restored to power. Iraq has also now established a basic tenet of liberty—no man is above the law.

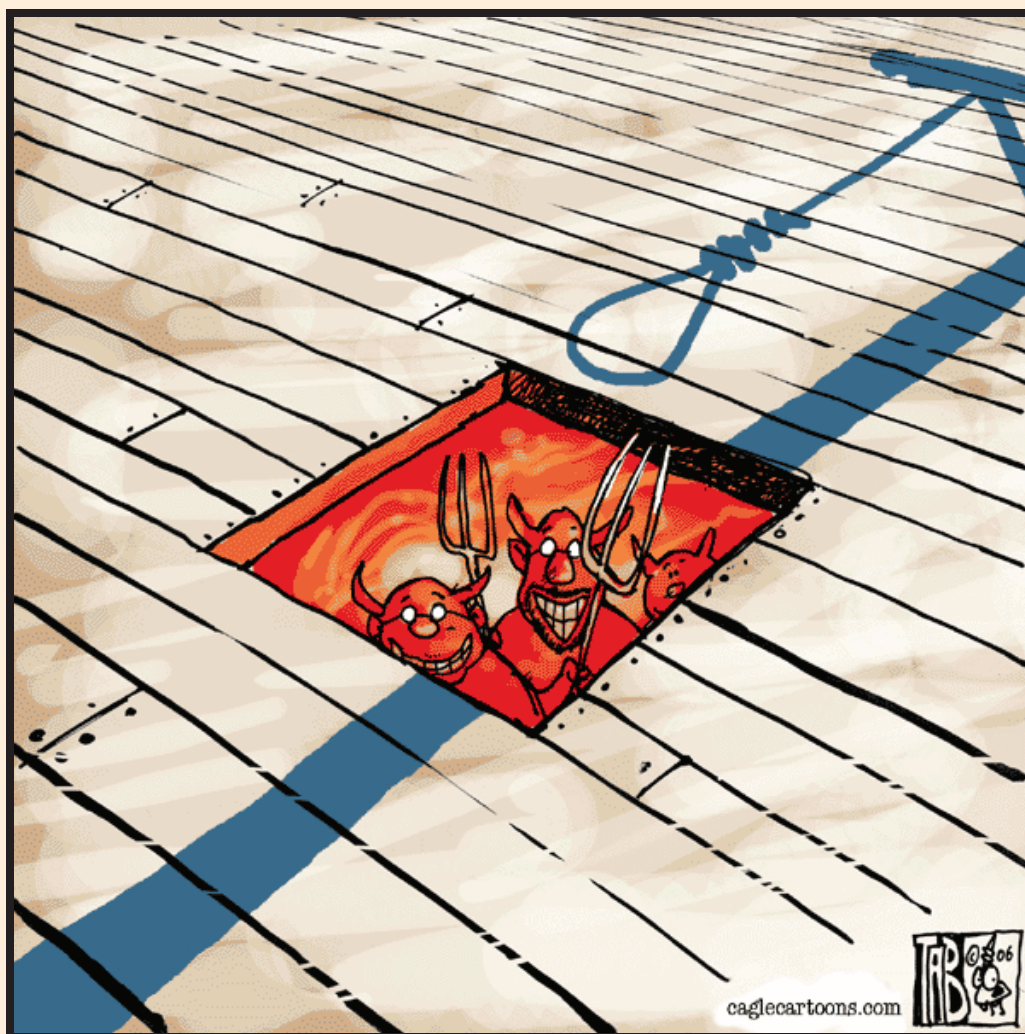
The Outlook

Hopefully, the death of Saddam marks the advent of a new paradigm for despots all over the world. For too long, leaders have killed their own people with impunity. The rules of realpolitik have excused the actions of tyrants, so long as their interests were similar to our own. The United States, for instance, provided logistical assistance and materials to Saddam's army during the Iraq-Iran War. The regime in Baghdad was seen as a bulwark to the spread of Islamic fanaticism from Tehran. Further, murder-

ous thugs like Tito, Stalin, Mao, Kim Il Sung, and Lenin all died while in office. However, the execution of Saddam could change all that: no longer do tyrannical despots have immunity for the crimes they commit against their own people.

Saddam was given due process, and he was found guilty in a court of law. This was not a show trial similar to that of the deposed Romanian tyrant Nicolae Ceausescu, nor was it similar to the lynching Mussolini received at the hands of an Italian mob. Saddam was tried according to the laws of Iraq, and he was condemned the murders he committed.

Tyrants of the world have two choices. They can abdicate power and turn over the political process to democratic forces, or they can continue to hoard power and face the consequences of their reigns of terror. Pinochet chose the first option, and though he was no saint, Pinochet arguably did much to improve Chile after the disastrous reign of Allende. The hanging of Saddam portends the fate of those despots who choose the second option. Sic Semper Tyrannus!



The Land Rights of Americans

by J.A. Hoffman

The illegal immigration problem will continue to be a pain to our citizens and immigrants from all nations until we arrive at a point of disgust where our statesmen and summer patriots develop a useable answer. We are not at this point yet, rather, we are at a point of rage on the margins, with apathy packed neatly into the center. The margins are passionate enough to start groups like La Raza, which has in its Constitution the plan for "conquer by immigration" in addition to groups such as the Minute Men, who actively arrest illegal immigrants and counter-march against illegal immigrant rallies.

It must be said that this last paragraph showed (and proves the fallacy of some pessimistic views and analysis' of the situation) that our democratic republic is healthy and continuing to positively mature and liberalize. America is one of the only countries where people commit crime to get to our shores. I digress that not all "liberalization" is positive, healthy or morally just, in fact, some push liberalization that is morally abhorrent and morally inconsistent. To say that any change is good is a corrupt statement, for "change" needs qualifiers. You cannot derive good from bad; you have to qualify the change to assure good.

The situation of immigration has been an issue since man gained the ability of mobility. Mankind did not have to worry about social issues when living was a challenge, yet in modern times we have the luxury of such discussion and opining on the topic. Our country is at the point of a crossroads in this – many people want to come to this country. Should those that simply have the ability to walk over a border have preference over a person from China, Nigeria, India or any other place? Well, of course not.

There is an immense issue in the question of land legitimacy of the South Western United States, at least in the mind of some. We need to answer this question, and the answer is this: no person of another sovereign nation may lay claim to another sovereign nation's land based upon the arguments of chronological issues. Once land is taken in just war (the justness of war shall not be discussed here), in land purchases, or by simple land development, it is in the possession of those that have mixed their labor with this land (to borrow an idea from John Locke). In the case of the Southwest, the land was lost by Mexico by means of loss in war and legitimate purchase by the United States and private parties. And what is more, the purchasers have continued to legitimize their claim by using the land.

To lay claim to land by arguments of complain about some ancestors fallacy is in itself an objectionable and ignorant argument. The truth of the matter is, we have something right here in America. People from the far right and the far left can peaceably disagree and work in the public arena to assure their opinions matter. Because of the rightness (not everything humanity touches is made moral) of our system, and the corruption of other governments, people want a piece of the American idea. People come to this country because in their country, corruption and complete self-interest run the social contract. Our social contract is one of assuring life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We are not perfect and many of our people working in the political arena are not perfect, yet this is only the condition of mankind: we are imperfect beings. People should recognize this and create government accordingly.



The Perpetual Minimum Wage

by Mark Eggleston

The national congress has passed an artificial minimum wage hike. The result of the hike will have no effect on bringing the lowest class of people out of their current situation. Although the short-term effect will be a temporary pay raise, it will be short lived as the economy must readjust based upon the lowest wage paid to workers. Companies that previously prided themselves on offering significantly better pay than the market must now compensate for the increase in the base wage. This will occur because businesses operate in our economy for the purpose of making money, not out of goodwill.

The company must compensate for the decreased profit through reducing costs by increasing efficiency in production, shifting jobs overseas to countries with lower labor costs, increasing prices, or closing for business. Each of these scenarios will be examined.

Companies will increase the efficiency in production through technological advances and eliminating the positions that had previously been held by the low skilled workers. They can also increase the efficiency through paying a more to a current worker to compensate for the loss of the lower skilled worker. Examples of this occurred in history with the Ford motor company. As worker rights have increased since the inception of the company, the workforce needed to produce the vehicles has also decreased.

In the past two elections, the topic of "shifting jobs overseas" has been a major issue. David Ricardo's theory of comparative advantage explains why companies are willing to shift jobs overseas. Comparative labor rates plus transitional costs have, in recent years, become much more competitive to have laborers in other countries produce goods for consumption in the United States. Clearly the best example of this is that of Nike and their overwhelming use of low wage laborers in the Asian countries.

Although this is an attractive position for some companies, it cannot be used by all companies.

Increasing prices is the trickiest of the solutions. Depending on the price sensitivity of a good or service, a few cents change in price could spell doom for that company's good or service. An average consumer primarily bases their decision on price of comparable goods. Increases in price can make a company no longer competitive. Coke and Pepsi will consistently try to match each other's deals as they attempt to maintain their volume of sales.

If the company can no longer provide a competitive service then they must close, thereby further decimating the loss of jobs in the economy. The list of companies that no longer exist due

to labor costs is far too long to list here. A loss of a company results in a lot more than just a loss of a product; the multiplier of that loss can be felt around the country as the employees of the company no longer have a means for providing for their family and must now rely upon the community until they are able to reintegrate into the workforce.

The minimum wage will always be that as companies and employees must try to find equilibrium for the most unskilled workers in the workforce and a pay rate for which their work is valued. It was

never intended to be a living wage for which a worker uses to work until retirement because a worker gains skills in that position for which can translate into better job opportunities. The minimum wage increase, we will see the effects of this superficial decision as the global economy is forced to adjust. It will be met with open arms by the American public as only 21 states remain at or below the current federal minimum wage. Hopefully, the minimum wage increase will not sting us back.

"Minimum wage was never intended to be a living wage for which a worker uses to work until retirement because a worker gains skills in that position for which can translate into better job opportunities. The minimum wage increase, we will see the effects of this superficial decision as the global economy is forced to adjust."

Mimicking Dictator in South America

Hugo Chavez and a Socialist Unification

by Tessie Lopez

Comprehending and justifying the various forms of government all over the world is a very difficult task to ascertain. It is especially difficult when U.S. citizens are accustomed to the Democratic Republic way of living, which has proven to be successful from its birth. Because of the country's economic success thus far, many leaders throughout many modern day countries such as Venezuela, Nicaragua, Colombia, and Ecuador, also desire that sense of economic independence; however, the United States of America is looked upon by these Latin American leaders as the imperialistic enemy, instead of the example of an organized successful government.

It is a logical fact to state that not every form of government functions for every established society. Latin America has been victimized through the revolutionary experiments of various rebels; to mention but a few of them: Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Augusto Pinochet, Daniel

Ortega, and now someone who is eager to be a part of the list, Hugo Chavez. Authoritarian rule has yet to prove to be successful for the beneficiary of the people yet Hugo Chavez is determined to change our minds, or is he?

Venezuela's soon to be dictator, Hugo Chavez, has already stirred quite a few controversies with his flamboyant headship. As the re-elected President of Venezuela for the third term, he has placed upon himself a reputation of demonstrating a lack of respect towards his opponents. His history as Venezuela's representative leader has been viewed as chaos for the opposing majority, yet ironically aspiring for the rebellious few.

Chavez's utilization of seditious and abusive language further exemplifies his authoritarian nature apart from his socialist actions. During the 2006 Venezuelan Presidential elections, Chavez's opponent Manuel Rosales stated that the election was flawed. He went as far as to mention that Chavez appointed many of his supporters to impose fear and terrorization to civilian workers intimidating anyone who refused to vote for Chavez with threats of taking away his or her job. In fact, Chavez's campaign manager of the United Socialist party of Venezuela, Rafael Lacava, proclaimed that the

campaign was to be based on "defending Venezuela's national sovereignty and promoting world peace." Is this mission clearly visible through the socialist, authoritarian structure Chavez is preparing by disrespecting and publicly humiliating opponents, threatening working civilians, nationalizing foreign investments, joining forces

"Chavez claims that Washington is trying to destabilize Venezuela, yet he seems to be doing an excellent job of that himself. By indicating an obsessive admiration with Castro's "reign" Chavez makes certain parallels apparent to his Venezuelan revolution and Castro's Cuban revolution: Verbal abuse against the United States government, nationalization of foreign investments, and close alliances to American opponents. Does the image of Iran's President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Hugo Chavez forming a potential alliance spring forth images of Nikita Khrushchev and Fidel Castro?"

with other socialist patented leaders, and befriending the current President of Iran? The answer to this question varies from each individual's ideology. To answer the many who believe that Chavez's actions demonstrate the exact opposite of what he promises, uncorrupted Venezuelan sovereignty and world peace is not accomplished through abusive adherences nor by mimicking the Cuban revolution, as he declares and aspires to do so.

Chavez publicly promised that when he were to be re-elected, he would convoke a referendum in the year 2010, as a midterm recall without the petitions that were needed for the 2004 recall. If the Venezuelan voters were to loose this recall, he insists that indefinite re-elections become a part of the constitution. Further-



more, Chavez claims praise in helping a percentage of the poor in Venezuela, in support of human rights, when he himself augments strength to the presidential authority, which may someday violate human rights due to excessive power bestowed upon the leader.

Suffering from a bad case of Venezuelan revolution? Here's the simple Venezuelan resolution: Chavez expropriation. Chavez claims that Washington is trying to destabilize Venezuela, yet he seems to be doing an excellent job of that himself. By indicating an obsessive admiration with Castro's "reign" Chavez makes certain parallels apparent to his Venezuelan revolution and Castro's Cuban revolution: Verbal abuse against the United States government, nationalization of foreign investments, and close alliances to American opponents. Does the image of Iran's President, Mahmoud Ahmadinead and Hugo Chavez forming a potential alliance spring forth images of Nikita Khrushchev and Fidel Castro?

To add further consternation regarding newly declared Socialist Venezuela, we have the unification of the other newly elected Latin American socialist president, Sandinista, Daniel Ortega. Ortega takes command over Nicaragua a second time after having caused terror in Central America in the 80's resumes power with the support of his socialist friend, Hugo. President Evo Morales of Bolivia, who represents the Movimiento Al Socialismo party, has also formed an

alliance with Hugo Chavez. Rafael Correa, sworn into office January, 15, 2007, represents the Alianza PAIS which is affiliated with the Ecuadorian Socialist Party, may also form a part of this revolutionary association.

2007 is the year when the rebellious alliance will initiate a greater force if not prevented. Hugo Chavez may appear as a joke, but sometimes, even jokes must be taken seriously.



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weapons is
a sign of
retarded sexual
and emotional
maturity”

-Freud